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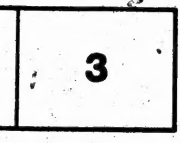

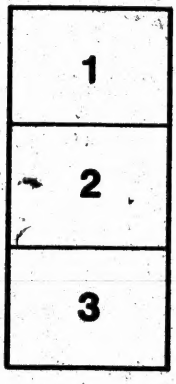

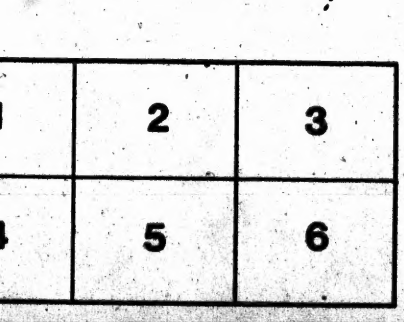

7th Thousand.

UNDOING THE WORK

OF

THE REFORMATION.

BY

VEN. F. W. FARRAR, D.D., F.R.S.,

Archdeacon of Westminster, etc.

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THE

PROTESTANT CHURCHMEN'S UNION

AND

TRACT SOCIETY.

OBJECTS.

1. To afford a basis of union, and opportunities for consultation and concerted action, for all Churchmen who accept the present Prayer Book and the Thirty-Nine Articles as their standard of doctrine and ritual, and who desire to uphold the principles of the Reformation as affirmed therein, and especially to maintain the non-sacerdotal character of the ministry of the Church of England.

2. To adopt whatever means may, from time to time, seem desirable to inform and instruct the public mind as to the true history and principles of the Church of England, with a view to maintain her essentially Evangelical and Protestant character, as fixed and established at the time of the Reformation.

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UNDOING THE WORK OF THE REFORMATION.

IN July, 1892, I wrote a paper in the *Contemporary Review* on "Sacerdotalism." In that paper I proved beyond all question, from the New Testament, from the authoritative documents and formularies of the Church of England, and from the evidence of some of her greatest divines, that English presbyters are in no sense of the words sacrificing priests; that, to those whose faith is derived from the teaching of Christ and His Apostles, the whole system of sacerdotal tyranny—which for centuries proved itself to be an intolerable evil to the Church and to the world—is nothing less than a daring usurpation. My paper aroused the sneers and even the vehement abuse of the Ritualist organs; but there was not one serious attempt to refute it, and it has brought me the earnest gratitude of thousands of English Churchmen, who are profoundly discouraged as they watch the systematic and, alas! too successful attempt to repudiate in the Reformed Church of their fathers the very truths on which and for which it was founded. How can they be otherwise than sick at heart as they note the re-introduction of those deadly errors—yes, even of the "blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits"—from which we were delivered at the Reformation by the battles and the martyrdoms of those who sealed with their blood their "death-defying utterance of truth"?

The time has come when it is the plain, imperative duty of every true member of the English Church to reassert, at all costs, the principles—the scriptural, the primitive, the historic principles—the assertion of which is the sole reason why their Church, as a Reformed Church, has any title to exist. If there be no valid eternal differences between the doctrines of the Church of England and those of the Church of Rome, and if there was no necessity for the Reformation to repudiate and condemn the ceremonies which were the outward expression of those doctrines, then every English Churchman is the member of a schism, and only makes

himself ridiculous and inconsistent if he loftily condemns as guilty schismatics his Nonconformist brethren.

Now, in this respect the Romish priests and their spokesmen are infinitely more consistent than our Anglican Ritualists. The Church of Rome has always recognised, and Ritualism has learned from Rome, the strategic value of unproved assertions. Roman controversialists, like the clergy of the Greek Church, scorn the notion that the English Church is anything but a schism. To them the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, our whole Bench of Bishops, and all our clergy—however much any of them may, in the false and baseless Romish sense, call themselves "priests"—are "simple laymen." Ultramontanes exult in all the principles laid down by St. Augustine in his treatises against the Donatists. They hold that schism is a deadly and inexcusable sin, and that schismatics are either outside the pale of salvation, or must be dubiously handed over to "uncovenanted mercies": and that Anglicans are such schismatics, both the Roman and the Greek Churches unflinchingly maintain.[1]

Above all, the Romanists laugh to scorn the pretence that Anglicans can accept all the essence of their teaching, and mimic even to absurdity their ritual, and become a feeble echo and a pale reflex of Rome in everything but name, and yet claim to be in any sort of independent union with them. It is now notoriously a common practice of Anglican "priests"—many of whom derive their stock-in-trade of catchwords and formulæ from Romanising manuals—to ignore the clergy and the Churches of their own communion on the Continent "as schismatic," and to "go to mass" in Romish churches; yet these very same men have no abuse too unchristian for a learned and large-minded English Bishop, who, in full agreement with the Bishop of London, and in direct accordance with the opinion and practice of all the leading High Church Anglicans of past days, did not hesitate to kneel in Holy Communion with Protestant Dissenters! In these days a man who openly professes and fearlessly maintains the truths which are the sole *raison d'être* of our existence is denounced by crowds of false Churchmen as being "no Churchman." It makes no sort of difference in this idle taunt that his views are those of all the

[1] See the *Dublin Review* for May, 1893, on "St. Augustine and the Donatists."

Apostles, of all the primitive Fathers, of the Prayer-Book, the Rubrics, the Articles, the Homilies, and of every authoritative document and every authoritative theologian of the Church to which he belongs.

I. There is, for instance, no shadow of doubt what is the teaching of the Bible, of the Prayer-Book, and of the Church of England about the clergy. The setting up of the Presbyterate as a sacrificial priesthood; the pretence that the ministry is vicarious, not representative; the assimilation of the English clergy to the "massing priests" of the Middle Ages; the claim that our presbyters perform acts of sacrifice as substitutes for the people—are demonstrably unjustifiable. To the proofs that they are so no attempt at an answer has been, or can be, given, except on premisses which our Church has deliberately rejected. The claim of priestcraft robs Christians of the most inestimable privilege of freedom which Christ purchased for them with His own blood. It is bringing back the deadliest virus of Romish error, and thrusting a class and a caste between the soul and its free, unimpeded access to God. Dr. Arnold said that "to revive Christ's Church is to expel the Anti-Christ of priesthood." The severity of the expression will show what myriads of true, uncorrupted Churchmen still hold. They will not bow their free necks and their free consciences to what history has shown to have often been the most blighting, debasing, and intolerable of all encroachments. The tyranny of priestly usurpation, where it can assert itself in anything more than pretence and clamorous assertion, has always proved to be more ruthless than the tyranny of either kings or mobs. I for one should prefer to have lived in the days of the Red Terror in Revolutionary France than to have been under the execrable tender mercies of the "religious" spirit established in Spain by the monster Borgia, and in the Netherlands by the monster Alva, whom Pius V. approved and blest. From that tyranny of a corrupt and apostatizing religionism we were saved in England by the blood of our martyrs, by the defeat of the Spanish Armada with its priests and thumbscrews, and by that "bright and blissful Reformation"—as it was called by the noblest of Englishmen—by virtue of which alone we can be members of the English Church. The Archbishop of Canterbury, on May 5th, in the Upper House of Convocation, said that "it is of great importance, *never more so than now*, to recognise that the Reformation

of the Church of England was one of the greatest historical events —*the greatest historical event, I think*—in the history of the Church, and that it was conducted by persons of very high capacity and the very largest knowledge." He said still more recently, "The Reformation brings back the Church of God to the primitive model," and yet "*I never take up books or magazines upon such a subject at present but I see a silly carping at our Reformation.*" Here then we have remarkable testimony that it is the cue of professed members of a Reformed Church—in her pay and under her shadow—to pour contempt upon the rock whence they were hewn and the hole of the pit whence they were digged!

Now the quintessence of the whole retrograde and anti-scriptural system lies in the pretence that the word "priest" in the English Church means anything but presbyter; that it is the equivalent of ἱερεύς, and not of πρεσβύτερος. Events have proved the wisdom of Hooker's opinion that "presbyter" is a truer, more Christian, and more fitting name for English ministers than the misinterpreted and much-dishonoured name of "priest." The Magna Charta of the Reformed Church of England is the Sixth Article, which points to Scripture as the sole, final and supreme authority on matters of doctrine. And the voice of Scripture on this matter is absolutely decisive. It cuts away the very taproot of the whole sacerdotal system. The Lord Christ was not a priest by birth, and never in His life on earth performed a single priestly function. If He is, in one Epistle of the New Testament, called our "High Priest," it is by way of Jewish analogy, in virtue of the sacrifice of Himself once offered; and the title is only given Him in the letter which most overwhelmingly disproves and excludes the further existence of any earthly priesthood or any other sacrifice. The Apostles give to themselves and give to Christian ministers ten separate names; but the one name which they NEVER give to themselves, and the one name which they most absolutely withhold from presbyters—even when, as in the pastoral epistles, they are specially writing *to* them and *about* them—is the name of "priest." The name "priest" does not so much as once occur in all the thirteen Epistles of St. Paul; not once in the Epistles of St. John; not once in the Epistles of St. Peter; not once in the Epistles of St. James and St. Jude; *nor once of Christian ministers in the whole New Testament.* Priesthood indeed occurs once in St. Peter, and once in a quotation by him, but only (by analogy, and

from the offering of purely *spiritual* sacrifices[1]) of *all Christians alike*; and thrice in the Apocalypse, but each time of *laity as well as presbyters*. All Christians are, as Justin Martyr says, an ἀρχιερατικὸν γένος τοῦ Θεοῦ. "Nonne et laici sacerdotes sumus?" asks Tertullian. Now all this may be nothing to Romanists, who set up their own infallibility; but Ritualists, who still nominally belong to the Church of England, and therefore presumably do not throw overboard her most essential opinions, can only writhe in vain round this transfixing spear-point of the doctrine of the Apostles. It is a self-refuting absurdity on their part to pretend that they can claim, and parade, and revel in *the one title* which neither Christ nor His Apostles, nor His Evangelists even remotely sanction. Nothing can disprove Bishop Lightfoot's conclusions that "THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST HAS NO SACERDOTAL SYSTEM, AND INTERPOSES NO SACRIFICIAL TRIBE BETWEEN GOD AND MAN." No amount of sophistry, no masses of casuistry, no number of reams of Jesuitical special pleading, can impair, in the mind of any plain man, the indisputable fact that Papists and Ritualists select, as the keynote of their whole system, the one term which the New Testament most absolutely ignores, and the one title which the whole system and reasoning of the New Testament most decisively rejects and condemns. The author of sacerdotalism is not the Divine Founder of Christianity, nor any of His Apostles, but that one of the Fathers (Cyprian) whose writings are the most jejune and Judaic, and whose Scriptural exegesis is the most hopelessly without insight, consistency, or value. The acceptance of the doctrine is demanded neither by Scripture nor by reason, but only by what Professor Lee called "Popish esoterics."

How significant, then, in the light of this fact is the remark of Ritualists like Lord Nelson and Lord Halifax that I am an unfair representative of the Church of England "because I do not believe in the priesthood," or something to that effect—repeated by the myriad-fold babble of Ritualistic correspondents in clerical

[1] The only sacrifices—except that one sacrifice of Christ once offered (Heb. vii. 27)—which the New Testament and the Church of England recognises may be seen in Rom. xii. 1; Heb. xiii. 13–16; Phil. iv. 18; 1 Pet. ii. 5. "Litabilis hostia," says Minucius Felix, "bonus animus, et pura mens, et sincera sententia; *hæc nostra sacrificia*."

journals. These false assertions are to me personally a matter of supreme indifference; but such language is *ominous* when addressed, as in this instance, to one whose views on the subject are exactly those of the Church of England. For I hold precisely the same view of the priesthood as was held and proved by Richard Hooker, whom High Churchmen taught me in my youth to regard as the one truest and soundest representative of the theology of the Church of England; identically the same view as that of Bishop Lightfoot, the most learned prelate of modern times; identically the same view as that of every single great divine of the Church of England from Bishop Jewel down to Bishop Harold Browne. Of what conceivable importance do Lords Nelson and Halifax and the *Church Times* suppose their opinion to be, as compared with the consensus alike of the New Testament, the Prayer-Book, the entire formularies of the Church of England, and the unanimous voice of all her great divines from the first until yesterday? The personal remark is to me nothing; but the sign of the times is of the darkest significance.

If by "a Churchman" be meant, not a Romanist, but one who faithfully holds the doctrines of the "Reformed Church" to which he belongs, as expressed by all its recognised formularies and exponents, the lack of churchmanship is with Lord Hálifax and the members of the English Church Union and of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, and not with me. It is they, not I, who are "no Churchmen."

II. The doctrine of Sacerdotalism is always allied to the doctrine of Transubstantiation, and Transubstantiation is one of the heresies which the Church of England at the Reformation most decisively and most emphatically repudiated. She might well do so. It is a late and gross corruption of crude materialism, not formally accepted even by the Church of Rome till the Lateran Council of 1215. The argument for it, such as it is, ignores the whole analogy of the faith. It is based like some inverted pyramid upon the crumbling apex of an utterly misinterpreted metaphor, a metaphor the perversion of which might well have seemed utterly inconceivable to any one who has even the most distant familiarity with Semitic modes of thought and expression. I cannot conceive any doctrine more essentially antagonistic to all that is pure, noble, and divinely spiritual in the gospel of Christ than this attempt to localise and materialize the Presence of God. As

yet, I believe, most Ritualists avoid the *word* Transubstantiation,[1] but they teach practically the same thing under various thin disguises and verbal jugglings. For a time they avoided the word "Mass," which had no possible charm beyond the fact that it was Romish; but they now openly boast that they have both the word and "the thing." Yet "the thing" practically means Transubstantiation and nothing less; and to teach it in the Church of England is not only heresy, but a direct defiance of her most explicit teaching.

From what I know of a considerable number of the clergy, and of the manner in which they express themselves, I do not think that I do them injustice when I say that I doubt whether they are at all accurately acquainted with the doctrine of the Church of Rome, or are aware how far they go even beyond it. Certainly in the phrases which the most ignorant—who are usually the most extreme of them—employ, they go beyond even the Romanist doctrine which is (according to Cardinal Newman) that "Our Lord is *in loco* in Heaven, not in the same sense in the sacrament. He is present in the sacrament only in substance (*substantive*), *and substance does not require or imply the occupation of place.* Our Lord, then, *neither descends from Heaven upon our altars*, nor moves when carried in procession. . . . We can only say that He is present *sacramentally.* The mixture of His bodily *substance* with ours is a thing which the ancient Fathers disclaim." He quotes Cardinal Bellarmine as saying, "*Per substantiam non occupat locum*"; and Billuart, "Christus *non est in sacramento ut in loco.*" If ordinary Ritualist preachers and writers are aware of all this, they use language which studiously serves to disguise their knowledge.

What else can it be called but the doctrine of Transubstantiation when a dignitary of the Church of England gets up in one of her great cathedrals, as I am credibly informed, and says, "My God

[1] They are, however, apparently, trying step by step to introduce it.

"When we separate from the notion of substance everything gross and material, *we may regard the term* Transubstantiation *as a convenient definition of the results of consecration* which the Articles do not exclude" (Address of Rev. A. L. Lewington to C.B.S. St. Margaret's, Stretton). The same gentleman also maintains that the presence of Christ in the consecrated elements is "objective." If the prevalence of this teaching is denied we can furnish the amplest proofs of it from the papers of the "Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament."

is lying on yonder altar"?[1] I will not pause to point out that Christianity has no altar but the cross, and no sacrifice but that of Christ once offered; to talk of "God lying on an altar" I believe in my utmost soul to be an expression from which St. Peter, St. John, and St. Paul would have revolted with horror and indignation as an abject heresy, as they would certainly have condemned the adoration of the elements—now openly recommended—as a degrading idolatry. Here, again, there is no possibility to hesitate or to doubt respecting the doctrine of the Church of England. It is, and always has been, absolutely and transparently clear. She rejects Transubstantiation, formally, expressly, unmistakably, indignantly; she rejects no less clearly Luther's doctrine of Consubstantiation; she rejects also Zwingli's doctrine that the Lord's Supper is a commemorative act alone; she teaches with absolute precision that the Lord's Supper is not a sacrifice; that the Lord's Table is not an altar; that the Body and Blood of Christ are received spiritually alone, and only by the faithful; that the Presence of Christ is in the heart of the true worshipper, and not, in any sense of the words whatever, in the hands of the priest, or locally on the Lord's Table; that there is no Presence whatever *extra usum*. Yet, in spite of the clearness of this her Scriptural teaching, and in spite of the consensus of every one of her formularies, and of all her greatest divines, every error of the Church of Rome on this subject is now taught in the Church of England openly and unreproved, even in namby-pamby books of Ritualism for children. Such manuals contain much which is in the last degree unscriptural and perverse. They are only too well calculated to make children first Pharisees and then Romanists. Have we in truth come to this—that in these days the grossest Romish superstitions can be ostentatiously taught in the Reformed Protestant Church of England as "Catholic" truths, no matter how

[1] God does not lie on altars, but

"Prefers before all altars the upright heart and pure."

He is not manipulated into material substances by the thaumaturgy of priests, but dwells spiritually in the souls of His worshippers. His presence is never in any sense an objective or corporeal presence in bread and wine, but is purely spiritual and purely sacramental in the life of the worshippers. It is an idolatrous apostasy to connect Him with a material idol. To exclude the possibility of such material perversion our Lord taught, "The flesh profiteth nothing. The words which I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life."

decisively they are condemned alike by the spirit and by the letter of her entire teaching? It is generally supposed that Convocation, in some sort, expresses the voice of the Church; but Convocation never opens without the Latin prayer, which—so far from calling the Reformation a *De*formation—states that "ad amussim SANCTÆ REFORMATIONIS NOSTRÆ, errores, corruptelas, et superstitiones olim hic grassantes, omnemque tyrannidem Papalem, *merito et serio repudiavimus.*" Is the state of opinion in the Church so torpid, is episcopal discipline so null, or so misdirected, that any ignorant youth from a theological college can now teach in the Church of England pulpits the worst of these errors, corruptions and superstitions unimpugned? If so, let her look to it, for evil is before her!

III. Auricular Confession is the natural result of sacerdotal encroachment and sacramental materialism; and if the once-Protestant laity of the Church of England can look on unmoved and see this practice—which has in all ages been prolific of the worst evils—reintroduced among them, it can only be either because they have been driven into contemptuous indifference by having been first betrayed, and then reduced to helplessness, or because they look elsewhere than to the Anglican Church for freedom and for truth.

For of auricular confession there is not the faintest vestige in the New Testament. It was absolutely unknown to the primitive Church. It was absolutely unknown to the Fathers, even amid the dense overgrowth of sacerdotal usurpation and corruption in the fourth century. It was a gradual innovation of the darkest part of the Dark Ages, and I have no hesitation in saying—and am perfectly prepared to prove to any extent—that it has been stamped by age after age with the just stigma of indelible abhorrence. The evidence comes, in generation after generation, from Romanists themselves. Their greatest divines show that it has constantly produced the deadliest and most execrable abuses. I should be sorry to stain this page with the horrible evidence of these abuses, even in modern countries and modern days; but if any one doubts my statement, the dark and damning proofs are superabundantly at hand. Where the system exists, there is no sure safeguard—there never has been any safeguard—against such abuses. They have been admitted by Council after Council, by Pope after Pope, by writer after writer; by Alexander IV., by

Pius IV., by Paul V., by Gregory XV., by Benedict XIV. They were pointed out by Abélard, by St. Bonaventura, by the learned and saintly Jean Gerson, by Savonarola, by Cardinal Cajetan, by Erasmus. They have been revealed to a horrified world in France, in Spain, in Germany, in Italy, and in England. The paper laid before the Council of Trent by a Romish archbishop contained revelations of the system as damaging as could have been written by any Protestant. As late as 1867 the Congregation of the Inquisition at Rome saw reason to issue an inquiry about these perils, and, although the details are always studiously hushed up, enough has been demonstrated before courts of justice, even in living memory, to show that the same causes lead, in many instances, to the same results.[1]

Now it is worse than preposterous to argue that this dangerous practice can be based on the pretence of any inherent priestly power to absolve sin. None but God can say, *Absolvo te.* A minister may use the formula in a *purely declarative and hypothetic sense*, which has not the smallest particle of validity apart from that sincere repentance which, as all Scripture tells us, is, and always has been perfectly efficacious, through Christ, without any priestly absolution whatever.[2] And it is equally futile to dwell on the natural and wholesome impulse of the struggling and penitent soul to unburden itself from the load of a guilty conscience, and to seek remission, in extreme cases, by the consolations of the Gospel. Every clergyman who has made it felt by his readers or hearers

[1] Even in England at this moment the details of a case are before me in which a servant girl has been invited to confession by her Anglican "priest," against the will of her parents, with results which even ten years ago would have made England ring with indignation. "The Priest in Absolution," issued by the Ritualistic Society of the Holy Cross, was described by Archbishop Tait as "a *disgrace to the community.*" Bishop Wilberforce called the system of confession "one of the worst developments of Popery, a sort of spiritual dram-drinking, fraught with evil to the whole spiritual constitution."

[2] The Præ-Communion address tells the people that if their conscience cannot otherwise be quieted, and they need further counsel and comfort, "they may come to some discreet and learned minister, that, *by the ministry of God's word*," they may receive the benefit of absolution. The Rubric in the Order for the Visitation of the Sick rightly recognises that power to pronounce a (hypothetic) declaration of absolution which was given by Christ not "to priests," but "to His Church"; and how little final is the "I absolve you" is proved by the fact that the absolution is immediately followed by a prayer for forgiveness.

that he is trustworthy, and able to comfort and advise, has probably received voluntary confessions from sinners. It is the privilege of every member of a religious community to seek religious help and counsel from his spiritual pastors. In that way, never seeking it, never urging it, never inviting it, I myself have heard, and frequently hear, many a tale of sin and woe outpoured to me by men with whom I have prayed, and whom I have advised, and by God's grace been enabled to help. But this differs *toto coelo* from auricular confession. It is utterly different from telling young women and others that "they must never go to mass" (as it is now called) "without confession";[1] that they "must kneel before their priest as a culprit before his judge"; that "the priest as far as his priesthood is concerned, is Christ Himself"; that "the priest washes and cleanses the soul, he restores it to health pure and white." It is inconceivably different from putting into the hands of ignorant servant girls English translations of Popish books on the confessional; from such travesties and misrepresentations of truth as the sentence that, Christ Himself received confessions, amongst others from *the woman taken in adultery, who remained with Him in the Temple*! It is inconceivably different from teaching our fellow-sinners to say, and to say repeatedly, "For these and all my other sins . . . I most humbly ask pardon of God, *and of you my spiritual father* penance, counsel, and absolution."

Again, it is worse than unavailing to quote John xx. 23 as though it gave any power to any priest to say, "I absolve thee," otherwise than in a purely conditional and declarative sense. On this point it will be enough for most English Churchmen if I quote the authority of our greatest and most learned living theologian, the Bishop of Durham: "The commission" (to remit and retain sins by virtue of the gift of the Holy Ghost) "*must be regarded properly as the gift of the Christian society, and NOT as that of the*

[1] Even Romish writers—such as St. Bonaventura, Cajetan, and Erasmus—admit that confession is not necessary. "For confession to a priest," says Bishop Lloyd, of Worcester (1693), "the necessity of it was unknown to the Fathers of the Primitive Church. *Nay, above a thousand years after Christ it was held disputable in the Roman Church.*" "To be placed under the obligation of going to a priest to confess," wrote Bishop Marsh . . . "is such an insult on a rational being, that even the prejudices of education are hardly sufficient to account for the patience with which the servitude is endured" ("Comparative View," p. 197).

Christian ministry. . . . . The gift and the refusal of the gift are regarded *in relation to classes, and not in relation to individuals.*" "It is impossible to contemplate an absolute individual exercise of the power of '*retaining.*' *So far it is contrary to the scope of the passage to see in it a direct authority to the absolute individual exercise of the remitting.*"

Also, it should be observed that the ignorant and indiscriminate abuse of auricular confession, which may be made in unscrupulous hands an instrument of the most intolerable and dangerous tyranny, is even more perilous in England than it is in the Church of Rome. For in the Church of Rome there is, I believe, some limitation put on the right to hear confessions. How are we to assume, in the face of fact, that all "priests" have that gift of "spiritual discernment," without which the pretence to absolve becomes not only baseless, but pernicious? But in the stress of unrestrained licence to which we have now been reduced and betrayed by supineness in the defence of truth, any silly youth who has barely scraped through a poll degree, and who may have shown in his ordination examination an incredible ignorance of the most elementary facts of Scripture, scholarship, and theology, thinks himself at liberty, as soon as he enters a parish, to pose as a confessor, and to tell men and women, whose very shoes he is not worthy to tie, that they are to come and kneel to him "as culprits before their judge." He will indeed find few—and none of any manliness and intelligence—to adopt such abject thraldom to one who may be immeasurably their inferior in the most elementary Christian graces; but he may do—as has been done a thousand times—quite infinite mischief to himself, and to weak and miserable souls. Not to dwell on his utter unfitness to dabble his unspiritual hands

> "In the dark dissolving human heart
> And hallowed secrets of this microcosm,"

such a youth, in his self-sufficiency and blindness, may hopelessly poison the peace of families; may subtly alienate the love of wives from their husbands; may sow discord between the daughter and her mother; may, in sheer incompetence, and without consciously wicked intentions, reduce the whole religious state of the silly and the impressionable to a chaos of hysteric falsities by teaching for doctrines the deceits of men. Bishop Wilberforce, all his life long an acknowledged leader of the High Church party, declared to his

clergy with passionate emphasis four days before his death that the system of auricular confession was baneful to the person confessing, baneful to the person receiving the confession, and, above all, baneful to the society in which the practice prevailed: but now the Ritualists are patronised by many bishops in their worst excesses, and all over the country the interests of the Evangelical laity are being trampled down with a contemptuous *insouciance* which in many cases is really shocking. These innovators of yesterday have utterly abandoned Hooker, and gone immensely farther than great old Anglican divines, like Bishop Andrewes and Jeremy Taylor, and even Archbishop Laud. They have even left far behind such Anglican leaders as Keble, Bishop Wilberforce, and Dean Burgon. Dean Burgon told them that they were "Sectarians and Separatists," who "as a party would have been disowned by Churchmen of every age and every school." Bishop Wilberforce, in his last public speech, described the growth of Ritualism "not as a grand development, but as a decrepitude"; "not as something very sublime and impressive, but something very feeble and contemptible." And already, like a swarm of locusts, Ritualistic practices have settled on every green field. In twenty years, if things are suffered to go on at the present rate—if the cause of the Reformation is on every side abandoned and betrayed—the Church of England will be Romish in everything but name. Lord Halifax will have had his ardent wish that there be restored "those *filial relations* that formerly existed between the successors of Augustine in the See of Canterbury and that chair which is now occupied by the successors of St. Gregory the Great":[1]—in other words, the Church of England will have finally undone the work of the Reformation, and will have been insidiously seduced back, step by step, into the corrupt bosom of the Church of Rome. And this is a consummation which Lord Halifax tells us he "ardently desires"—yet the certainty of being abused and slandered to death, and the sure loss of all chance of promotion and preferment, is to deter Evangelicals from speaking out!

This hardly resembles the "ardent desire" of our homilies: "The Lord defend us from their tyranny and pride, that they never enter into the vineyard again to the disturbance of the silly poor flock."[2]

[1] Expressed at the Leicester Church Congress, September, 1880.

[2] And the Bishops of the Lambeth Conference hardly share this "ardent

And what will come of this? What *has* come of absolute and unquestioned Roman supremacy, and abject submission to it, and the abandonment of Christian truth and Christian freedom to

"That grim wolf with privy paw"

which now, much more than in Milton's time,

"Daily devours apace and nothing said"?

We have object-lessons enough all over the world from Mexico to Great Britain. Will any one compare Romish Ireland to Presbyterian Scotland in progress, in education, in freedom? Is Romish Connaught to be matched with Protestant Ulster? Is the black decrepitude of Spain in the sixteenth century, with its thrice-accursed Inquisition, to be compared with the England of Elizabeth or of Cromwell? In Switzerland will you compare the Popish cantons of Lucerne and the Haut Valais with the Protestant cantons of Berne and Geneva? Bossuet taught that not to hear mass on Sundays, and not to confess and communicate at Easter, were mortal sins, and merited eternal damnation, and were irremissible but by confession and absolution. What then must be the spiritual condition of at least 30,000,000 Roman Catholics in Romish France? In spite of 50,000 priests and a whole army of "religious," they never dream of communicating or confessing either at Easter or any other time. Why? Because they have been driven into incredulity by superstition. If Sacerdotalism, Transubstantiation, and the Confessional, re-introduced by Ritualists into our Reformed Church, are to pervert Protestant England—to which, and to Protestant America, Romish bishops in France constantly appeal as examples of respect for religion—how is it that they have been so deadly a failure throughout the Roman Catholic world? Why is it that, in the third generation, the Romanists lose almost all hold over Romish immigrants? Why is it that, in Romish France, the artisan has already lapsed altogether from the faith, and the peasant is daily following the example? Why is it that in multitudes of French villages scarcely any but women and

desire." They say that reunion with Rome is only possible "on condition of a complete submission to her claims of absolute authority, and the acceptance of *those other evils, both in doctrine and in discipline, against which, in faithfulness to God's Holy Word, and to the true principles of the Church, we have been for three centuries bound to protest.*" Moreover, the American Bishops unanimously agree that by her two last "infallible" decrees Rome has cut herself adrift from all Catholic unity.

children go to mass, and only 100,000 out of the 2,000,000 inhabitants of Paris? And how is it that out of ten millions of these "Catholics" five or six millions deliberately vote for atheists, or agnostics, as their representatives? If Romanism, under the name of Ritualism, triumphs in England, we shall see the same results. Already numbers of Evangelical laymen — grieved, abandoned, insulted in clerical newspapers, and despondent almost to death—have had their allegiance to the Church of their fathers rudely shaken and impaired; already many of them are being driven to worship in other religious communities, because they will not tolerate a Romish Church of England. Already multitudes, and even whole congegations, refuse to subscribe to diocesan funds which they fear may be expended in the promotion of Romish innovations. A few years ago many of them would have fought, heart and soul, as one man, to arrest the peril of Disestablishment; now they will scarcely lift a finger to avert the overthrow or humiliation of a Church which, in their opinion, is turning its back on the very principles of its foundation. For the same reason thousands of Nonconformists, and nearly all the Methodists, would now vote as one man for Disestablishment, which, even twenty years ago, they sincerely opposed.

But there is another class—a class, unhappily, of disastrous and ever-increasing magnitude—which will never accept such a form of religion as Rome or the Ritualists offer. It is not averse to the simple gospel of Christ, but it is now being driven into indifference. There are thousands in England, where fifty years ago there were only scores, in the upper classes, who now devote their Sundays exclusively to worldly amusements, who rarely enter a church, and scarcely ever dream of partaking of the Holy Communion. In the working classes such men may be counted by millions, and their numbers will steadily increase as Ritualism increases. England may be driven by Ritualism into infidelity, but I believe that she will have to reel back into barbarism before she becomes Romish, or again accepts the form of religion which the Spanish Armada would have forced upon us with stakes and implements of torture. On the day on which I write, Bishops and Churchwardens are assembling to denounce the Welsh Suspensory Bill. But what is the cause of the Nonconformist animosity to which the Welsh Suspensory Bill owes its origin? The Nonconformists in Wales feel no hatred towards Evangelical Christianity,

but, according to the Archdeacon of Llandaff, they cannot bear with a Church in which "they believe that 'the mass' is being made the centre of religious worship; that ministers have, in practice, become sacrificing priests; that Sacerdotalism, with its train of dangerous error, has become the prominent power of our churches; that the private Confessional is being made the door of full membership." "The Welsh nation," says the Archdeacon, "does not want a Church that busies herself in drawing narrow lines of demarcation. It wants a Church that can appreciate Christian virtue and Christian work wherever these are to be found. When it finds such a Church, it will not refuse to cherish it."[1] Disestablishment will be one of the first consequences of the triumph of Ritualism; and immediately after Disestablishment will come the necessity for, and the certainty of, a NEW REFORMATION to re-establish the truths which Ritualism endeavours to overthrow.[2] Of one thing the bishops, and the Ritualist clergy, and the members of the English Church Union, may rest assured: it is that, even if they re-establish the Inquisition, in all its terrors, and not in its present milder forms, as they are exercised in the *Church Times* and similar "religious" newspapers—

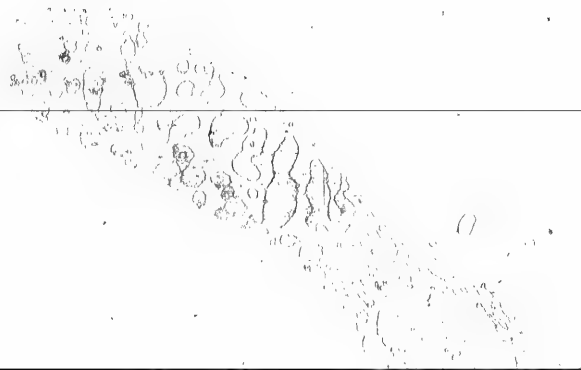
> "Fagot and stake were desperately sincere,
> Our cooler martyrdoms are done in type—

there are—in spite of this tyranny—myriads of Englishmen, and not a few even among the clergy, who will not stand a Church of England which shall tend to become Romish in all but name, or perhaps Romish even in name. The days of disruption are being hastened on with giant strides. May God avert the unspeakable evils which they will inevitably bring in their train!

F. W. FARRAR.

[1] Speech of the Archdeacon of Llandaff at Neath, April 25, 1893.

[2] Dr. Pusey was not usually regarded as "a rabid Protestant." Pope Pius IX. compared him to the bell which is always ringing the people to the church, but does not itself go in. Yet Dr. Pusey, preaching before the University of Oxford in 1838, said that the Church of Rome "had incurred the Apostolic curse," and "showed herself the descendant of them which slew the Apostles." "There is not," he said, "an enormity which has been practised against people or kings by miscreants, in the name of God, but the divines of that unhappy Church have abetted or justified." As she has never confessed and repented these crimes, and boasts that she is infallible and unchangeable, I cannot understand the "ardent desire" of Ritualists for reunion with her.



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